



February 22, 2012

Julius Genachowski, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Comments on NTIA Letter; IB Docket No. 11-109

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

The National Agricultural Aviation Association (NAAA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) letter regarding the LightSquared Conditional Waiver; IB Docket No. 11-109. The Global Positioning System (GPS) is a vital tool for agricultural aviation and a technology we rely on heavily in the aerial application industry. Based on the comprehensive testing completed and NTIA conclusion that LightSquared and GPS cannot co-exist harmoniously, we fully support the FCC's decision to vacate the conditional waiver order and indefinitely suspend LightSquared's ATC authorization.

NAAA consists of more than 1,700 members in 46 states, and represents the interests of small business owners and pilots licensed as commercial applicators that use aircraft to enhance the production of food, fiber and bio-fuel; protect forestry; protect waterways, pastureland and rangeland from invasive species; and control health-threatening pests. Pesticides and their timely application play a vital role in protecting our food and water supply, public health, natural resources, infrastructure and green spaces. Approximately 18 percent of crop protection products applied in the U.S. are applied by air. Aerial application is often the only, and/or most economic method for timely pesticide application. It permits large and often remote areas to be treated rapidly, thus ensuring timely and efficient service. When surface water, wet soil conditions, rolling terrain or dense plant foliage prevents the use of other methods of application, aerial application may be the only remaining method of treatment. Additionally, aerial application is conducive to higher crop yields, as it is non-disruptive to the crop and causes no soil compaction, hence preventing soil runoff. This results in more food and fiber being produced

using less land allowing the land to be repurposed for other uses, including habitat preservation for endangered and/or threatened plant, animal and aquatic species; and for preserving vegetative ecosystems important to the sequestration of carbon.

As we have remarked in our previous comments regarding IB Docket No. 11-109, GPS technology is a necessity in our industry and one almost every aerial applicator utilizes. It provides swath guidance to within one meter accuracy of where ag pilots want to place chemicals, crop protection products, seeds or fertilizers. This innovation in the industry not only allows for considerably improved occupational safety, but also allows for the most efficacious application possible; thereby minimizing pesticide applications needed and spray drift potential. However, GPS and other technologies comes with a significant financial investment and GPS systems alone can range from \$8,000 to \$18,000, depending on whether they provide basic guidance or also incorporate a moving map, flow control and a more capable processor. According to a pesticide use survey NAAA conducted in 2011, there are on average 2.2 operating aircraft per aerial application company. According to the Small Business Administration, the revenue threshold for a large business under this NAICS code (561710) is \$7 million and 50 employees. This threshold is significantly larger than the average aerial application business, which is about four people (two pilots, a mixer-loader and an administrative staffer). Asking aerial application businesses to incur significant additional costs to shield their GPS devices from LightSquared's signals was an exorbitant and unfair request, particularly for small businesses that provide such an invaluable service—protecting a safe, affordable and abundant supply of food, fiber and biofuel. As was also mentioned in previous comments, aerial application is so important to agricultural, forestry and public health protection because it is by far the fastest method of application.

With more than 3.3 million jobs relying on GPS technology, NAAA is pleased the FCC appreciates that the time and money necessary to devote to making GPS equipment compatible with a nationwide high-powered terrestrial network is not feasible at this time. NAAA remains committed to working with the FCC in reaching a beneficial solution for the future that allows for the most efficient and practical use of all spectrum to best serve the needs of American consumers and the millions of users of the GPS industry alike.

Thank you for consideration of our comments in support of the NTIA letter regarding LightSquared's conditional waiver.

Sincerely,



Andrew Moore
Executive Director